

Students
First!

EXAMINERS' REPORT

JUNE

1990

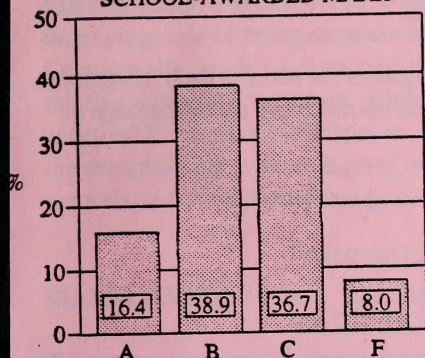
Student Evaluation

English 30 Diploma Examination Results

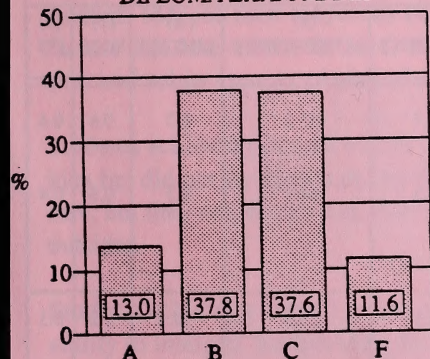
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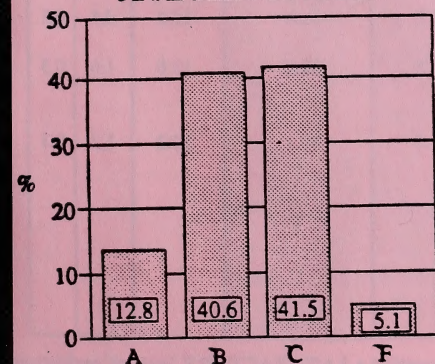
SCHOOL-AWARDED MARK



DIPLOMA EXAM MARK



FINAL BLENDED MARK



The summary information in this report is intended to provide teachers, school administrators, students, and the general public with an overview of results from the June 1990 administration of the English 30 Diploma Examination. The information is most helpful when used in conjunction with the detailed school and jurisdiction reports that have been mailed to schools and school jurisdiction offices. The first annual provincial report containing a detailed analysis of the combined January and June results is available this fall.

DESCRIPTION OF THE EXAM

The English 30 Diploma Examination consists of two parts: a written-response section worth 50% and a multiple-choice section worth 50%.

ACHIEVEMENT OF STANDARDS

The information reported is based on the final blended marks achieved by 13 506 students who wrote the June 1990 examination.

- 94.9% of these students achieved the acceptable standard (a final blended mark of 50% or higher).
- 12.8% of these students achieved the standard of excellence (a final blended mark of 80% or higher).

PROVINCIAL AVERAGES

- The average school-awarded mark was 65.9%.
- The average diploma exam mark was 64.7%.
- The average final blended mark, representing an equal weighting of the diploma and school marks, was 65.8%.

PART A: WRITTEN RESPONSE

Part A: Written Response is written at a different time from Part B: Reading (Multiple Choice) and contributes 50% of the total examination mark. Students are required to complete two writing assignments, each of which assesses a variety of writing and thinking skills.

Readers will find the results most meaningful in the context of the assignments and the scoring descriptors. The most useful starting place for reviewing these results is at the (3) SATISFACTORY level. Such work exceeds the pass mark of 50%. The scoring guides that describe proficiency levels are in the *English 30 Diploma Examination Update for 1991*, which is available in all schools.

The table below outlines the requirements for each assignment, the categories for scoring each assignment, the amount each category contributes to the total mark (Parts A and B combined), and the percentage of students achieving at the various levels of expectation.

PART A: WRITTEN-RESPONSE BLUEPRINT
and
PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF RESULTS

DESCRIPTION OF THE WRITING ASSIGNMENT	SCORING CATEGORY	PROPORTION OF TOTAL MARK (%)	PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF SCORES					
			(5) EXCELLENT	(4) PROFICIENT	(3) SATISFACTORY	(2) LIMITED	(1) POOR	(0) INS
<u>Minor Assignment</u> The student is required to write a personal response to the reading selection provided in the examination.	1. Thought and Detail	7.5	3.4	31.9	55.2	8.5	0.6	0.4
	2. Writing Skills	7.5	3.6	32.3	54.8	8.3	0.6	0.4
<u>Major Assignment</u> The major assignment maintains a thematic connection to the minor assignment. The student is required to demonstrate an appreciation of literary works studied through a discussion of theme and the literary techniques that support that theme. The student is also required to synthesize thoughts clearly and correctly in writing.	1. Total Impression	5.0	2.8	18.3	55.3	22.1	1.2	0.3
	2. Thought and Detail	12.5	2.7	19.0	45.4	30.2	2.4	0.3
	3. Organization	7.5	2.8	20.0	60.4	15.8	0.8	0.3
	4. Matters of Choice	5.0	3.4	23.3	59.0	13.0	1.0	0.3
	5. Matters of Convention	5.0	5.2	31.0	50.1	12.2	1.2	0.3

Note: The shaded portion represents the percentage of students who achieved or exceeded a SATISFACTORY level of performance.

EXAMINERS' COMMENTS

MINOR ASSIGNMENT: Personal Response to Literature

Students seemed able to relate with ease to the reading selection, which was a closing excerpt from *The Wabeno Feast*, a Canadian novel. Students were evaluated on how they used the selection to comment on the topic of being an "outsider" rather than on their interpretations of the selection.

Markers found that responses to this assignment were a pleasure to read. Typical responses were focused on experiences of being separate and alone and were clearly related to a quotation from the selection. Occasionally, students discussed the topic without quoting specifically from the selection and without relating a personal anecdote. This more generalized, philosophical response to the assignment was accepted if the student's response could be evaluated in terms of how well it related to the experience in the selection and to the assigned topic. Markers observed, however, that the most effective responses were those in which students gave concrete illustrations of the topic from their personal experiences.

MAJOR ASSIGNMENT: Literature Composition

Students demonstrated through their responses to the major assignment that they were generally comfortable with and successful at adapting a wide variety of literature to the topic. The majority of students focused their responses on the topic, and established and developed a controlling idea. The factors that determined the level of student achievement were fluency, focus, and control of both expression and subject matter (thoughtful literary interpretations).

Students achieving overall scores of "3" SATISFACTORY frequently presented a reasonable controlling idea but did not develop it to any degree. Such students identified and described an outsider from literature, but they neglected to explore what the author might be saying about the condition of being an outsider.

Students achieving overall scores of 4s and 5s showed confidence in their use of language and in their ability to interpret the literature insightfully. Such students frequently extended their discussions well beyond the assessment and description of characters as outsiders to discussions of the author's broader implications. These students had something worthwhile to say and they said it well.

PART B: READING (MULTIPLE CHOICE)

RESULTS

Results are in average raw scores.

Total Part B: 46.7 out of 70

Subtest Results:*

- Course Content
 - Meanings: 20.8 out of 32
 - Critical Response: 16.8 out of 24
 - Human Experience and Values: 9.1 out of 14

* Readers are cautioned NOT to compare subtest results because the subtests are not of equal difficulty. Readers should compare these provincial subtest results with their own school results.

EXAMINATION BLUEPRINT				
Part B: Reading (Multiple Choice) has a value of 70 marks, one mark for each multiple-choice question. Each question is classified in two ways: according to the curricular content area being tested and according to the thinking (process) skill demanded by the question. The examination blueprint illustrates the distribution of questions in June 1990 according to these classifications.				
Question Type by Course Content	Question Type by Thinking Skills			Examination Emphasis (%)
	Literal Understanding	Inference and Application	Evaluation	
Meanings	4, 5, 17, 44	1, 8, 9, 24, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32, 35, 39, 41, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 68	6, 7, 37, 40, 46, 48, 53, 56, 64	32 items (23%)
Critical Response	2	3, 10, 13, 23, 25, 30, 33, 34, 36, 43, 50, 54, 57, 65, 66, 69	26, 38, 42, 47, 55, 67, 70	24 items (17%)
Human Experience and Values		11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 51	21, 22, 45, 49, 52	14 items (10%)
Examination Emphasis (%)	5 items (4%)	44 items (31%)	21 items (15%)	70 items (50%)

The following table shows question-by-question results and the keyed answers. There is a parallel table in the school and jurisdiction reports showing the percentage of students selecting each alternative. From this table, teachers can determine areas of strength and weakness in the achievement of their students relative to the province as a whole and, consequently, areas of strength and weakness in their programs.

QUES.	KEY	DIFF.*	QUES.	KEY	DIFF.	QUES.	KEY	DIFF.	QUES.	KEY	DIFF.	QUES.	KEY	DIFF.
1	C	72.0	15	C	71.4	29	D	67.2	43	D	83.1	57	C	69.8
2	A	74.1	16	B	78.7	30	D	53.8	44	C	76.3	58	D	58.6
3	A	69.8	17	B	61.8	31	C	71.6	45	A	45.5	59	C	86.6
4	B	66.4	18	D	43.3	32	B	86.3	46	C	63.0	60	D	62.0
5	C	33.5	19	D	62.3	33	C	77.8	47	B	71.7	61	A	60.5
6	D	63.6	20	A	53.4	34	C	71.1	48	B	71.3	62	D	46.2
7	B	81.3	21	C	45.5	35	D	81.9	49	D	66.5	63	C	47.9
8	B	54.6	22	A	76.1	36	A	65.2	50	A	77.4	64	B	58.3
9	D	80.6	23	C	84.4	37	B	38.3	51	B	58.3	65	C	69.6
10	D	61.6	24	A	85.8	38	B	47.8	52	C	68.5	66	A	68.6
11	B	90.2	25	B	75.9	39	A	59.2	53	B	65.4	67	B	78.5
12	A	66.0	26	D	71.8	40	A	77.7	54	B	65.6	68	D	53.5
13	B	58.9	27	C	67.1	41	A	67.6	55	C	78.5	69	D	75.0
14	A	83.4	28	A	58.9	42	D	59.2	56	A	57.6	70	A	71.7

*Difficulty – percentage of students answering the question correctly

EXAMINERS' COMMENTS

During the marking session, a committee of English 30 classroom teachers reviewed the June 1990 English 30 Part B: Reading (Multiple Choice) examination to determine whether the standards embedded in the readings and the questions were appropriate and fair. The committee members concurred that the June 1990 examination set a reasonable standard of achievement for graduating English 30 students. The teachers also stated that the examination would clearly distinguish between high-achieving and low-achieving students.

Students' performance on the Part B section confirmed the teachers' expectations: performance was generally satisfactory, and results demonstrate that students who achieved high total scores (Part A: Written Response plus Part B: Reading) were those who achieved the highest scores on Part B: Reading (Multiple Choice). The results also indicate that these students consistently employed their skills of close reading and confirmed their ideas by re-examining the text. These students appear to have read the questions and the alternative answers very carefully.

The table below relates to four selected questions from the examination. For each question, three statistical references are noted: the percentage of all students choosing the correct answer, the percentage of students answering correctly who achieved the STANDARD OF EXCELLENCE (80% and better, or "A") on Parts A and B combined, and the percentage of students answering correctly who achieved the ACCEPTABLE STANDARD (50% to 64%, or "C") on Parts A and B combined. The comments following the table discuss some of the decisions that students made and some of the skills that they used to answer correctly.

Percentage of Students Correctly Answering Selected Questions
(Parts A and B Combined)

Student Group	Question Number			
	4	5	62	63
All Students	66.4	33.5	46.2	47.9
Students Achieving the Standard of Excellence (80% and better, or "A")	88.5	61.7	76.6	85.3
Students Achieving the Acceptable Standard (50% to 64%, or "C")	57.2	22.3	33.6	32.5

Questions

4. That Canada's size is a main factor in its coming to terms with its identity is indicated by the phrase
- A. "Mythologies are huge cairns" (line 7)
 - B. "sheer weight of geography" (line 29)
 - C. "the largest, most powerfully defined national soul" (lines 34-35)
 - D. "a country of immensely varied beauty and landscape" (lines 96-97)

Comments

Question 4 required students to read closely and to consider context before choosing an answer; essentially, it assessed literal reading skills. Students found this question to be of average difficulty with 66.4% of the students choosing B, the correct alternative. Most students were able to equate "weight of geography" with "size," a low level inference. Students achieving the standard of excellence on the whole examination were particularly successful: 88.5% answered correctly. Students achieving the acceptable standard on the whole examination did reasonably well: 57.2% answered correctly.

Questions

5. Which of the following does the author identify as being the initiating factor in the process of defining a "national soul" (line 32) for both Canada and Russia?

A. Size
B. History
*C. Literature
D. Introversion

Questions 4 and 5 are part of a set of ten questions based on an excerpt from "¿Aca nada?," a lecture by Robertson Davies. The teachers who reviewed the examination for appropriateness of standards agreed that the vocabulary and style of the selection are challenging but quite appropriate for English 30 students.

62. The statement "A wild animal never plays for the other side" (line 57), suggests in context that wild animals

A. are self-destructive
B. have no sense of competition
C. have a keen sense of competition
*D. are not handicapped by complexity

63. The author's closing comments (lines 52 to 65) imply that human purity and simplicity have been corrupted by

A. love of life
B. love of liberty
*C. desire for knowledge
D. desire for material gain

Questions 62 and 63 are part of a set of ten questions based on an excerpt from "Africa", an essay by Lance Morrow that was published in Time magazine in February 1987. The text on which questions 62 and 63 are based is descriptive and somewhat philosophical. However, the teachers who reviewed the examination for appropriateness of standard agreed that the text was beautiful, that it was appropriate – if somewhat challenging – and that it dealt with an important idea.

Comments

Question 5 required students to read the stem closely – particularly the phrase "initiating factor" – and to reread the excerpt beginning at line 32 and following through to line 39, the end of the next paragraph. The 33.5% of the students who did this read "the talk of the Canadian soul has begun for us, as it began for Russia, with our writers" and so chose C, the correct alternative. Of the students achieving the standard of excellence, 61.7% answered this question correctly. Only 22.3% of the students achieving the acceptable standard answered correctly. Interestingly, 34.6% of this group chose alternative A as the correct response. It is likely that these students did not use the text as the source of their response and so, to some degree, confused questions 4 and 5, believing them to be asking essentially the same question.

Question 62 required students to relate the contextual meaning of a significant quotation to the overall meaning of the essay. Inherent in the question is the requirement that students be able to interpret meaning beyond the literal level. This question discriminated well between students achieving the standard of excellence and students achieving the acceptable standard: 76.6% of the students achieving the standard of excellence answered correctly, while only 33.6% of the students achieving the acceptable standard chose the correct alternative. Many of this second group of students chose either B (30.0%) or C (31.4%), probably because of the word "competition," with which they connected the phrase "plays for the other side." If these students had confirmed their initial opinions by re-examining the quote in context, probably more of them would have chosen the correct alternative.

Question 63 also required students to infer the meaning of particular lines in relation to the meaning of the whole essay. The skill being assessed is careful contextual reading. Again, this question was relatively difficult; only 47.9% of the students chose the correct alternative. Many of the students achieving the standard of excellence (85.3%) answered correctly. These students used their skills of close reading to review lines 52 to 65 before answering the question. Very few students achieving the acceptable standard (32.5%) answered correctly. The 56.9% of the students who wrongly chose alternative D probably did not reread the stem in context and had a "knee jerk" reaction to the question. The author does not state or imply anywhere in his essay that "desire for material gain" is the cause of the corruption of human purity and simplicity.

The results for questions 62 and 63 confirm that even when texts appear straightforward, some students are not reading closely nor are they making refined judgments. Students who are answering correctly have demonstrated that they can interpret text, infer meaning from context, and relate parts of a text to the whole.



